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COUNTRY East Germany SECURITY INFORMATION REPORT

TOPIC Kummersdorf Bombing and Target Range

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REFERENCES

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. Between 18 and 26 July 1953, bombing was repeatedly practiced over Kummersdorf bombing range, mostly by GA planes. The aircraft released their bombs and approached again firing their guns. Bombing was also practiced at night during the same period. At 6:30 a.m. on 27 July, two GA planes flying at a low altitude approached the target ground and dropped smoke bombs. They were followed by six aircraft which dropped one bomb each into the smoke screened area and fired at targets which were apparently located outside of the screen. The screen lasted for about 15 minutes. At 11 a.m. on 28 July, two jet fighters flying straight at an interval of about 300 meters, approached targets located in Jagen 111 and Jagen 112 (forest district). As soon as they had reached the security line of the target ground they successively dived to an altitude of 150 to 200 meters, each plane dropping two bombs, as was clearly determined from the detonations heard. At 10-minute intervals two of three other jet fighters dived on the target dropping bombs, some of them coming down from the cloud ceiling which was at an altitude of 1,400 to 1,800 meters. On 29 July, GA planes dropped bombs. From 7 p.m. until after midnight on 26 August, aircraft which had position lights set dropped bombs. Several searchlights were lighted. On 27 and 28 August, duds were exploded. Between 17 and 18 September, bombing was practiced at daytime by jet fighters and GA planes. At night on 22 September, bombs were dropped by conventional aircraft.
2. In the morning and in the afternoon on 21 July, Il-10s flying in V formation or individually approached the bombing range, dropped bombs and then fired with their board guns. During the bombing practiced on 22 July, the first plane of one V formation dropped a smoke bomb while the other two planes of the formation dropped live bombs. It was observed for the first time that a smoke bomb was dropped. The aircraft which approached individually pushed over to dive on the target, while the planes flying in formation peeled off. The bombing continued on 24 and 25 July. Another smoke bomb was dropped on 25 July. On 26 July, at 5/10 overcast, Il-10 approached the target range, flying at an altitude of about 3,000 meters. The aircraft dived in succession on the target from an altitude of about 200 meters and fired with their guns. Between 3 and 4:30 on 28 July, Kummersdorf target range was twice approached by two swept-back jet fighters coming from the east. They flew a wide circle over the bombing ground, dived on their second approach at an angle of attack

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of about 45 degrees to an altitude of about 400 meters, each aircraft releasing two bombs and pulled out of the dive at an angle of 30 degrees. In one case the two bombs could be seen as they dropped. All bombs exploded. The aircraft then flew another circle over the target ground and left in an eastern direction, partially hidden by the clouds. Twelve conventional aircraft, flying in four V-formations in line approached the bombing range and dropped bombs in a dive from an altitude of about 2,500 meters. The entire formation pulled out of the dive in a left bank, climbed to an altitude of 2,000 meters and attacked again, firing their guns. Between 6 and 8 a.m., on 29 July, aircraft were observed diving on the target range, but no bombs were dropped. The weather was cloudy. Between 7 and 8 p.m., four formations of nine Il-10s flying in wedge formation approached the airfield in succession, peeled off to the left, dived on the target and dropped bombs. During the second attack they fired with their guns. On 28 August, a radio station was erected on elevation 80. The station consisted of a radio truck, a special trailer with two vertical grid antennas on a mast, about 25 meters high, a truck and a tent and was operated by 8 or 10 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets. It was still there on 7 September. A second radio station consisting of a radio truck with a rod antenna, 5 to 7 meters high, whose personnel wore blue epaulets was set up at the edge of the Fernneueudorf village at night and was removed in daytime. After 8 p.m., conventional aircraft, flying with position lights set, dropped bombs on the target range. Searchlight repeatedly lit up. When one of the aircraft was caught by a searchlight, the plane fired a signal whereupon the searchlight was turned off. On 31 August, bombing was practiced between 7 and 9 a.m.

3. On 21 July, bombs were dropped on Kummersdorf target range by single engine monoplanes which dived on the target, released one bomb and pulled out of the dive firing with their guns. In the afternoon, the aircraft approached flying in four finger formation, and circled once over the field, then dispersed and dived at intervals of 60 to 80 meters. After dropping their bombs, they fired with their tail guns. On 22 July, bombing and shooting at ground targets was practiced between 6:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. The aircraft first approached individually and later came in V formation. On 24 July, bombing and shooting was practiced until 5 p.m. In the morning on 25 July, a formation of nine aircraft was over the target, dropping bombs and shooting. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the aircraft approached in four finger formations. At about 11 a.m. on 28 July, jet aircraft flying at intervals of 400 to 500 meters dropped bombs. No gun fire was observed. On 29 July, single-engine monoplanes dropped bombs. No jet aircraft were observed. Between 6 and 11 a.m. on 30 July, single-engine monoplanes approached in formations of eight aircraft and dropped bombs. Between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., formations of 36 single-engine monoplanes repeatedly approached the target ground, dispersed in V formations at intervals of 200 meters, dropped bombs and fired with their machine guns. After the dive, the aircraft reassembled to formations of nine aircraft. After 2 p.m., aircraft flying in four finger formations and another formation of 36 aircraft continued the bombing. This bombing practice continued in the morning on 31 July. On 4 August, Kummersdorf was approached by individual aircraft, but no bombs were dropped. Single-engine monoplanes flying in 4 finger formations later dropped bombs and fired with their guns. Around noon and in the afternoon, formations of up to 10 single-engine monoplanes approached, dispersed and flying individually dropped their bombs. Between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on 5 August, individual single-engine monoplanes dived on the target, dropped bombs and fired with their guns. Between 11 and 14 August, flying was practiced, but no bombs were dropped. Between 8 and 10 p.m. on 25 August, aircraft dived on the target range, but apparently dropped no bombs. On 26 August, this routine continued with bombs dropped this time. On 29 August, single-engine monoplanes flying in V-formation were over the bombing area. Having flown one circle over the range, each aircraft dropped

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two bombs. Bombing was practiced after 8 p.m. on 31 August and in the morning of 1 September. On 22 September between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., single-engine monoplanes practiced bombing and fired with their tail guns. The bombing continued between 7 and 10 p.m. On 23 and 24 September between 7 and 10 p.m., elements of three aircraft dropped bombs over the target range.

4. The following bombing practices were observed at the Kummersdorf bombing range between 29 August and 27 September 1953:

29 August. About noon, two single-engine monoplanes were over the range, each dropping two bombs and firing with its machine guns.

31 August. Bombing practice was observed between 8 and 10 p.m. After 10 p.m., two multi-engine aircraft circling over the target range were caught in the beams of several searchlights.

1 September. From noon to 2 p.m. and from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., single-engine monoplanes practiced bombing.

23 to 27 September. Single-engine monoplanes practiced bombing in daytime and in the evening.

Comment. It is believed that the Kummersdorf bombing range is used by aircraft of the GA regiments stationed at the Brandis airfield, Altdoerne- witz and Finsterwalde airfields and the regiments of the fighter division stationed at Grossenhain.

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